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**ALBUQUERQUE ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW MEXICO BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 20, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Neil Longenbaugh of Albuquerque Academy as its 2010-11 Gatorade New Mexico Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Longenbaugh is the second Gatorade New Mexico Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Albuquerque Academy.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the racecourse, distinguishes Longenbaugh as New Mexico's best high school boys cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Longenbaugh joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-00, 2000-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-11 senior raced to the Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:10.05, leading the Chargers to the state title as a team. Longenbaugh also captured victories at the Los Alamos Invitational and the District 5 Championships.

Longenbaugh has maintained a 4.27 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of a program that provides meals for underprivileged families.

"Neil has been a mainstay and a cornerstone of our program," said Albuquerque Academy head coach Adam Kedge. "He shows great resolve, and he has always put team accomplishments ahead of individual accomplishments."

Longenbaugh remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Longenbaugh joins Gatorade New Mexico Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Kyle Pittman (2009-10, Los Alamos), Bryce Palmer (2008-09, Eldorado), and Ben Johnson (2007-08, Albuquerque Academy) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners, and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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